



2006
AmeriCorps
REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
INSTRUCTIONS FOR
INDIANA APPLICANTS

ALL APPLICATIONS ARE DUE DECEMBER 12, 2005



OFFICE OF FAITH-BASED AND COMMUNITY INITIATIVES
302 W. Washington Street, E012
Indianapolis, Indiana 46204
(317) 233-4273 phone (317) 233-5660 fax
www.ofbci.in.gov



October 12, 2005

Dear Potential AmeriCorps Applicants,

The Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives (OFBCI) and its Indiana Commission on Community Service and Volunteerism (ICCSV) promote volunteerism throughout our state and in 2006 provided over \$1,700,000.00 in AmeriCorps funding. We are dedicated to uniting individuals in service to their communities and achieving demonstrable results by funding AmeriCorps programs that meet Indiana's unmet human, educational, public safety, homeland security and environmental needs. We are proud to announce our Request for Proposals (RFP) for 2006-2007.

Over 400 Hoosiers are serving in AmeriCorps programs this year in both our urban and rural areas. AmeriCorps members get amazing things done and make a significant difference in the lives of so many Hoosiers.

Through this RFP, community organizations and governmental agencies throughout Indiana can compete for funding to expand or create high-impact service opportunities for members of their community.

Our 2006 RFP contains 4 sections:

1. Does AmeriCorps Fit My Organization? (PDF)
2. 2006 AmeriCorps Request for Proposals Instructions for Indiana Applicants (PDF)
3. AmeriCorps* State and National Application Instructions (PDF)
4. AmeriCorps*State 2006 Application Appendices (PDF)

For 2006, the Indiana Commission will consider applications for new and continuing AmeriCorps programs that offer members a living allowances and an education award. We will also consider applications for AmeriCorps programs that offer education awards only. We encourage you to choose the option that best meets your organization's needs.

Please read all application instructions carefully. **All applicants must attend one AmeriCorps Application Technical Assistance Workshop** in either Evansville (October 24), Ft. Wayne (November 1), South Bend (November 4), or Indianapolis (November 14 or November 15). Workshop details are available on the OFBCI website (www.ofbci.IN.gov). **All applicants must submit a Letter of Intent to Apply to OFBCI by November 18, 2005.**

All applications must be received by our office no later than 5:00 p.m. on Monday, December 12, 2005.

Please DO NOT FILE YOUR APPLICATION in eGrants. If your application is accepted, you will be notified and given special instructions at that time.

THIS RFP REQUIRES PAPER APPLICATIONS.

The Indiana Commission is committed to providing the most current information available to all applicants. We will rely primarily upon our website, www.ofbci.in.gov, to keep applicants informed of any changes. Please check our website frequently. We want to provide you with all of the resources and technical assistance you need to develop an extraordinary grant application.

Sincerely,

PAULA PARKER-SAWYERS
Executive Director



1. What is the Indiana Commission on Community Service and Volunteerism?

The Indiana Commission on Community Service and Volunteerism (ICCSV) is the governor-appointed administrative agent of the AmeriCorps*State Program in Indiana for the Corporation for National and Community Service. Supported by the Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives, the ICCSV is dedicated to uniting individuals in service to their communities and achieving demonstrable results by addressing Indiana's unmet human, educational, environmental, public safety, and homeland security needs. The ICCSV's goals are to:

- Encourage Indiana's strong ethic of civic responsibility and rich tradition of community involvement;
- Ensure a serious role for service and volunteerism in meeting Indiana's educational, environmental, health, public safety, and homeland security challenges;
- Connect Hoosiers from diverse backgrounds and experiences to find solutions to problems together; and,
- Nurture the growth and emergence of Indiana's next generation of community and professional leaders.

To meet these goals, the ICCSV selects and administers AmeriCorps grants under the provisions of the National and Community Service Trust Act of 1993. In Indiana, more than 400 AmeriCorps members serve annually under the sponsorship of public-private partnerships to meet critical state needs. Since its inception, the ICCSV has secured and disseminated over \$10 million in AmeriCorps funding from the federal Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) to local and statewide public and nonprofit agencies that have created opportunities for over 4,000 AmeriCorps members to serve Indiana. The ICCSV provides AmeriCorps programs with extensive training and ongoing technical assistance to support the development of high quality AmeriCorps programs. Each program works closely with a National Service program officer to ensure progress towards program objectives, a meaningful service experience for AmeriCorps members, and compliance with applicable regulations.

Beyond its grant making responsibilities, the ICCSV seeks to promote volunteerism throughout the state and to honor those who serve its communities. Further, the ICCSV recognizes individuals and groups who are making a difference in Indiana through their service activities. Nominations will be accepted this winter and the awards will be presented at the Governor's Conference on Service and Volunteerism in April 2006.

For more information about the ICCSV, please visit our website at www.ofbci.in.gov.

2. What are the 2006 AmeriCorps Application Instructions for Indiana Applicants?

All New and Continuing AmeriCorps Applications are due by December 12, 2005.
All AmeriCorps Education Awards Program Applications are due by December 12, 2005.

An original application and 5 duplicates, bound by standard binder clip only, must be delivered by December 12, 2005 at 5:00 p.m. to:

Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives
302 W. Washington Street E012
Indianapolis, Indiana 46204
Attention: National Service Program Officer

Applicants approved by the Indiana Commission for National & Community Service, Inc. (ICCSV) for funding will be required to submit a revised application using the Corporation's eGrants system at a later date.

3. Who is Eligible to Apply for AmeriCorps Funding?

New Applicants. The ICCSV encourages the development of innovative programs operated by partnerships new to the AmeriCorps family and in communities that have not previously utilized AmeriCorps resources. New applicants are defined as those in which the partnership has not previously operated an AmeriCorps program.

Existing ICCSV AmeriCorps Programs. Current ICCSV programs must, by law, submit applications via two different processes. Existing programs who are finishing their third year of a grant award must submit a *new* application. Programs in their first or second years of the grant award will submit a *continuation* application.

Existing programs must complete a one-page summary describing program impact and accomplishments for the current grant in addition to providing copies of any evaluations completed on the program in the last four years. More information regarding these requirements is included in the **2006 AmeriCorps* State and National Application Instructions**. Existing programs must also assure that all WBRS-related activity, including enrollment of members and entry of service hours, is current at the time of submission. In addition, existing programs are advised that previous site visit reports, program progress reports, financial reports, WBRS documentation, as well as member recruitment and retention rates will be reviewed as part of the selection process. Systems for improving known deficiencies in any of these areas should be addressed in the program narrative.

4. What are the 2006 AmeriCorps Grant Parameters?

Funding Available. AmeriCorps funding comes to Indiana primarily through two separate funding streams – formula and competitive funds. The ICCSV receives formula funds from the Corporation through a population-based allocation. Formula funds are generally awarded to less experienced programs or first-time applicants. Competitive funds are awarded through a national competition to programs that have competed successfully at both the state and federal levels. While programs funded through the national competition are typically veteran programs, are larger in size, and/or have particularly innovative program designs, first-time applicants may also be funded at the competitive level. The ICCSV's current portfolio contains AmeriCorps grants that range from \$96,000 to \$480,000.

The ICCSV will award formula funds for 2006. We will not be sure how much formula funding is available until the Corporation announces its final appropriation from Congress through its approval of the 2006 Federal Budget Act.

There are 3 kinds of AmeriCorps funding opportunities available for 2006-2007:

1. Operating Grants. Operating grants support fully developed plans to implement a new or existing AmeriCorps program. Applicants interested in applying for an operating grant should review either the *Instructions for New and Recompeting State or Education Award Program Applicants* section or the *Instructions for Continuing State and Education Award Program Applicants* section of the **2006 AmeriCorps*State and National Application Instructions**.

2. Planning Grants. Planning grants are designed to assist faith- or small, community-based organizations in their development of a strong AmeriCorps program design. The purpose of planning grants is to bring small, community-based and/or faith-based organizations to the verge of implementation so that they may compete successfully for operating assistance in the following grant cycle. In general, planning grants do not exceed \$50,000 and cover a period of 6 to 12 months. Applicants interested in applying for a planning grant should review the *Instructions for Planning Grant Program Applicants* section of the **2006 AmeriCorps* State and National Application Instructions**.

3. Education Award Program (EAP) Grants. The National Direct and State Education Award programs do not offer living allowances to AmeriCorps members but do provide an education award upon successful completion of national service. Please review **2006 AmeriCorps*State and National Application Instructions** for further information.

Grant Size Limits. AmeriCorps grants are calculated by multiplying the number of full-time equivalent, now referred to as member service year (MSY), AmeriCorps members

by the cost per full-time member. For example, a successful applicant requesting 25 full-time AmeriCorps members (MSYs) at a cost per member of \$12,800.00 would receive a grant of \$320,000 (25 x \$12,800.00). You must match at least 15% of member support costs with non-federal cash. You must also match with cash or in-kind contributions at least 33% of the project's total operating costs. Please note that Indiana AmeriCorps members are NOT eligible for unemployment compensation.

Minimum Program Size. In order to provide member positions in quantities that make an impact on the identified community need, the ICCSV policies require that applicants request no fewer than 10 full-time equivalent AmeriCorps members as part of their application. Rural programs may be eligible to apply for a smaller number of AmeriCorps members and a part time AmeriCorps Program Director. Please contact our office for further information.

Grant Period. Grants awarded through this selection process will support programming beginning in late summer of 2006. The Corporation and the ICCSV generally provide funding for a three-year grant period, with demonstrated success toward achieving program objectives and the completion of a yearly continuation request. Applications for 2006 must include proposed activities and a detailed proposed budget for the *first year of operation* and *program objectives for a one-year period*.

Expansion Funding. Applicants should be advised that expansion opportunities in the second and third year of a grant period are unpredictable and may be limited. Applicants should not assume they can expand program operations in the second or third year of the grant period. Existing recompeting programs that wish to expand their program should propose to do so through this application.

Performance Measures. Creating performance measures is a critical part of AmeriCorps program design. Applicants should:

- think through each of the different activities AmeriCorps members will engage in;
- identify the likely impact or change that will result from those activities; and,
- determine how to best measure those results.

We strongly encourage your organization to plan and develop your performance measurement program based upon the Logic Model. Once you have mapped out your grant design, decide what is important to measure. Please be selective and do not measure every activity. Decide what you want to measure and focus your attention on key needs and service activities that make sense for your organization and its mission. Use the Logic Model plan and performance measurement worksheets early in the process of completing your application, as experience indicates well-constructed performance measures are essential to a quality application.

5. What is the 2006 AmeriCorps Application Review Process and Selection Criteria?

Review and Selection Timeline

2005

October 12th

2006 Request for Proposals announcement

October-November

Technical Assistance Workshops

October 24th

Evansville

November 1

Ft. Wayne

November 4th

South Bend

November 14th

Indianapolis

November 15th

Indianapolis

November 18th

Intent to Apply Letters for new and recompeting applicants due to OFBCI

December 12th

ALL applications due to the Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives by 5:00 p.m.

2006

January 17, 2006

The ICCSV Program Committee reviews all applications; makes recommendations for funding. Grant negotiations may begin.

February 3, 2006

Final date for submitting approved grant applications electronically to OFBCI

June 2006

CNCS announces final AmeriCorps Competitive Grant Awards; ICCSV announces program selections

All applications are reviewed by the ICCSV and the Corporation. We typically receive more in funding requests than can be awarded. Applications are selected using an intensive, multi-stage process that includes the ICCSV peer review process, Corporation peer review panels, and review by Corporation staff with approval by the Corporation's Chief Executive Officer.

All applications are initially screened by the ICCSV for completeness and instruction compliance. Applications are sorted by score and ranked by two primary factors – high quality (as determined by score) and geographic distribution. A recommended portfolio



of programs is brought before the ICCSV where approval is given to submit applications to the Corporation.

All applicants, whether applying for competitive or formula funds, must meet a minimum score threshold in order to be considered for funding. Applicants that are selected to compete in the national competitive process will be forwarded to the Corporation after receiving feedback collected from the review process by the ICCSV staff.

The ICCSV staff will work with these applicants to submit the final proposal electronically via eGrants. The Corporation will make funding decisions following the completion of their review process. The ICCSV will finalize its program selections following the Corporation's announcements in June 2006.

Please see the **2006 AmeriCorps*State and National Application Instructions** for a list of Corporation funding priorities and AmeriCorps grant selection criteria.



TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO APPLICANTS

The ICCSV provides technical assistance to new and recompeting applicants in several RFP Technical Assistance workshops. RFP Technical Assistance Workshops will review the key elements of completing a proposal with potential applicants. Locations for the workshops are:

OCT 24, 1:00 – 3:00 p.m.	Evansville, IN
NOV 1, 1:00 – 3:00 p.m.	Ft. Wayne, IN
NOV 4, 1:00 – 3:00 p.m.	South Bend, IN
NOV 14, 1:00 – 3:00 p.m.	Indianapolis, IN
NOV 15, 1:00 – 3:00 p.m.	Indianapolis, IN

WE WILL ONLY ACCEPT GRANT APPLICATIONS FROM NEW OR RECOMPETING APPLICANTS WHO HAVE ATTENDED ONE OF THE WORKSHOPS AND HAVE SUBMITTED A LETTER OF INTENT TO APPLY BY NOVEMBER 18, 2005.

Please register to attend one of these schedules times by emailing the OFBCI at RFP_Workshop_Registration@ofbci.IN.gov

The ICCSV will posts frequently asked questions (FAQs) to the OFBCI website to assure that all applicants have access to the same technical assistance. Please email questions to: RFP_FAQ@ofbci.IN.gov.